



Application of "Fashion Design Process" in Developing Contemporary Fashion-Collection Based on Batik Purbalingga

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Abstract

Keywords:

Batik Purbalingga, Fashion Design Process, Creative Framework, Fashion Collection, Ready-to-Wear

Fashion designers in Purbalingga face challenges due to limited knowledge of a systematic fashion collection development process. The existing creative process often relies on self-taught skills or the transfer of abilities from other artistic disciplines, which highlights the need for a structured framework to guide designers in developing fashion collections. This research aims to introduce the Fashion Design Process (FDP) framework to local designers and evaluate its effectiveness in supporting their creative process and fashion collection development. The research was conducted in several stages, including the introduction of the FDP framework, assignments and mentorship, as well as monitoring and evaluation. The framework was introduced through classroom sessions involving portfolio analysis, recommendations, and examples of application. The effectiveness of the program was assessed through direct interviews with participants after the program. The results show that all participants, regardless of their educational background, were able to complete the assignments according to the stages of the Fashion Design Process. The quality of their work also improved, as reflected in the jury's evaluation during the runway presentation. However, the research stage was identified as the most challenging and time-consuming part of the process. The Fashion Design Process (FDP) framework proved effective in helping local designers structure their creative process and improve the quality of their design work. Nevertheless, the research stage requires further evaluation and improvement in future programs.

INTRODUCTION

Batik is one of Indonesia's most important cultural heritages and has long functioned not only as a textile tradition but also as a medium of identity, symbolism, and regional expression. In Purbalingga, Central Java, batik developed within the broader Banyumasan cultural sphere and is characterized by local motifs such as Lumbon, Jahe Sarimpang, and Gemek Setekem, as well as the use of earthy slogan tones typical of inland Javanese batik traditions. Several geometric motifs, including Kawung and Parang, also carry philosophical and historical value. As with many traditional crafts in Indonesia, batik making in Purbalingga is generally passed down through generations, making its sustainability closely linked to local cultural transmission and artisan regeneration.

Batik crafting, as a tradition, is usually passed down through generations within a family. Every region possesses distinct motifs, including those in Purbalingga, Central Java. Batik

Purbalingga exhibits Banyumasan characteristics, featuring traditional motifs such as Lumbon, Jahe Sarimpang, Gemek Setekem, and others. The colors employed, similar to other batik pedalaman (originating from Java's interior regions, in contrast to coastal regions), predominantly consist of sogen (brown) hues. Several geometric motifs, such as Kawung and Parang, are still considered sacred, reflecting their original use in the palaces of Yogyakarta and Surakarta.

The development of this craft has encountered numerous challenges, including poor artisan regeneration, insufficient skills among novice batik makers, and the perception that Purbalingga lacks distinctive designs compared to neighboring Banyumasan batik (Octavia et al., 2024). This perception reduces its market value, leading to adverse consequences such as declining interest among the younger generation, diminished commercial opportunities, and other related impacts.

In response, the Purbalingga Regional Government has initiated training programs that address both production and marketing aspects. The primary objective, aside from safeguarding the batik-crafting tradition, is to establish batik as a viable source of income (Chen, 2018; Wesnina et al., 2025). To promote local distinctiveness while embracing contemporary trends and styles, initiatives such as competition-driven development of new batik patterns inspired by Purbalingga's characteristics are held regularly. The government is also actively involved in the Batikmark "Batik INDONESIA" certification, ensuring that Batik Purbalingga meets national quality standards. Furthermore, one of Purbalingga's motifs, Lawa (consisting of six variations), has been officially copyrighted, with ownership belonging to local artisans [source].

[Sample motifs: batik lawa kembar, batik goa lawa, batik kalong megar, batik motif kembang lawa, batik mutika goa lawa, batik eksotisme goa lawa] The latest initiative seeks to increase the market value of batik by transforming it from a simple textile into a fashion product. Local designers primarily lead the creation of fashion products inspired by Purbalingga's motifs, and the fabric is often tailored to meet customer specifications. To further expand its use, there are ongoing interests and plans to develop this fabric into a ready-to-wear clothing range (Wibowo et al., 2021; Wulandari et al., 2019; Yati, 2021).

The primary challenge for local designers in developing a ready-to-wear collection is their limited knowledge of how to establish a cohesive theme and direction. Currently, their creative process relies on self-directed learning or the adaptation of skills from other artistic disciplines, such as painting, into fashion design (Hopkins, 2012; Setyorini et al., 2021; Sulyanto et al., 2016). This research aims to present the Fashion Design Process as a framework to guide the creative process in designing contemporary ready-to-wear collections. It also seeks to assess the effectiveness of this framework when used as a practical guideline outside academic institutions (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015; Chinta et al., 2016).

Fashion design is a multifaceted process that is frequently misunderstood as being solely reliant on intuition. According to Ng (2017), the process can be articulated through a tripartite model comprising three integral components: feeling, meaning, and trend.

"Feeling" refers to the sensation experienced when an individual sees or uses a garment product. Historically, garments have served to differentiate socio-economic classes within society, including royal families, commoners, farmers, other professions, and religious authorities. This practice continues today, although the context has evolved. Observing a

garment can provide insights into the wearer's social class, personality traits (such as authoritative, laid-back, or unconventional), ideological stance (conservative or progressive), and other attributes.

“Meaning” is a continuation of feeling, exploring the manifestation of desired emotions through “fashion language.” This language is expressed through the selection of fabrics and materials, ornamentation and embellishments, silhouettes, colors, and textures. At this stage, a designer must observe, experiment (through trial and error), and organize these elements into a cohesive product.

“Trend” defines the direction of a collection. In the context of ready-to-wear fashion, this typically follows prevailing market trends. Consequently, the process of translating “feeling” into “meaning” is not entirely unrestricted but is constrained by parameters, such as adherence to successful elements of prior collections or adaptation to current trends.

This need becomes particularly significant because many local designers in Purbalingga do not come from formal fashion education backgrounds (Purwandaru et al., 2023; Purwanti & Rizkikaddhuhani, 2023). Their creative practices are often shaped by self-teaching or by transferring skills from other art forms such as painting or batik design. While such experience can support creativity, it may not be sufficient for developing a structured fashion collection. Previous studies on fashion design emphasize that designing is not merely an intuitive act but a process involving conceptual, visual, and market-based decisions. Au, Taylor, and Newton (2004) describe fashion design as a staged process, while Ng (2017) explains it through the interrelated dimensions of feeling, meaning, and trend. Similarly, Lee and Danko (2017) highlight the importance of documenting and understanding the design process as part of fashion methodology. These studies suggest that structured design thinking is essential in producing collections that are conceptually strong, visually coherent, and responsive to the market.

At the same time, studies on Batik Purbalingga have mostly focused on motif exploration, local meaning, artisan empowerment, and business development. Research by Fathuroh and Setiawan (2021), Wardoyo et al. (2019), and Setyorini et al. (2019) contributes to understanding the symbolic richness and creative potential of local batik motifs. However, there is still limited research examining how these motifs can be systematically transformed into contemporary fashion collections through an applicable design framework. In other words, studies on Batik Purbalingga have largely concentrated on textile, cultural, and community aspects, while studies on the fashion design process have generally been developed in formal academic or industrial settings. The intersection between these fields, especially in the context of local non-academic designers, remains underexplored.

Based on this gap, this study introduces the Fashion Design Process (FDP) as a structured creative framework for developing contemporary ready-to-wear collections based on Batik Purbalingga. The FDP is expected to help local designers move beyond intuition-based practices toward a clearer and more systematic workflow, covering stages from design brief and research to design development, prototyping, and final collection output. This study is important because it addresses both practical and theoretical needs: practically, it supports local designers in improving the quality and coherence of their collections; theoretically, it contributes to discussions on how fashion design frameworks can be adapted outside formal fashion institutions and applied in local cultural contexts (Lukman et al., 2022; Saraswati et al.,

2019; Setyawati et al., 2017).

Therefore, this research aims to introduce the Fashion Design Process framework to local designers in Purbalingga and to evaluate its effectiveness in supporting their creative processes and fashion collection development. More specifically, the study seeks to examine whether the FDP can function as an accessible and effective guideline for designers with diverse educational backgrounds, and how the framework influences the quality, consistency, and cultural articulation of their final collections. Through this approach, the study also aims to strengthen the position of Batik Purbalingga as a source of contemporary fashion innovation while preserving its local identity.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the application of the Fashion Design Process (FDP) in developing contemporary ready-to-wear collections based on Batik Purbalingga. The approach was chosen because the research focused on understanding participants' creative processes, identifying the difficulties they encountered, and evaluating the effectiveness of the FDP framework in a real training and mentoring context. Although simple scoring was used to support the analysis of portfolios and final outcomes, the main emphasis remained on qualitative description and interpretation.

The research was conducted in two primary phases: a preparation phase and an implementation phase. The preparation phase included the development of a suitable fashion design framework and a gap analysis of participants' portfolios. The implementation phase consisted of training, mentoring, and monitoring, followed by evaluation after the program's completion. The training stage was particularly important because most participants were self-taught or had acquired fashion design skills from other artistic disciplines, such as painting or batik design, while only a few participants had formal vocational backgrounds.

The research took place in Purbalingga in collaboration with AFDEGA (Asosiasi Fashion Designer Purbalingga). The association served as a partner in facilitating participant involvement and program activities.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and portfolio analysis. Interviews were conducted using both structured and unstructured formats to gain deeper insights into participants' experiences. Ethical considerations related to documentation were addressed by obtaining participants' consent for recording and publication, and personal data were anonymized using codenames.

A descriptive qualitative approach was used to evaluate the results, supported by simple statistical measures to aid interpretation. For instance, average scores were used to assess the complexity and coherence of designs based on patternmaking, sewing, and finishing aspects. These scores were not intended to be standardized but rather to support descriptive analysis. The research involved both in-person engagement and remote observation, with documentation conducted through recordings and visual materials.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Twenty-four members of the AFDEGA attended the FDP training, but only fifteen were able to complete the entire process. Therefore, they are the only participants included in the analysis. Due to confidentiality, the participant's name is replaced with alphabet.

Table 1 List of Participants

Participants	Highest Education	Formal Education in Fashion or Not	Design Exp. (Years)
A	S1	Non-Fashion	< 5
B	SMK	Non-Fashion	< 5
C	S1	Fashion	> 5
D	S1	Fashion	> 5
E	SMA	Non-Fashion	> 5
F	SMK	Non-Fashion	< 5
G	SMA	Non-Fashion	> 5
H	S1	Non-Fashion	> 5
I	SMA	Non-Fashion	< 5
J	S1	Non-Fashion	> 5
K	SMA	Non-Fashion	< 5
L	SMK	Non-Fashion	> 5
M	SMA	Non-Fashion	> 5
N	S1	Non-Fashion	> 5
O	SMP	Non-Fashion	> 5

Source: Primary data processed by researchers (2025)

LEGEND:

S1 : Bachelor degree
 SMA : High School
 SMK : Vocational School
 SMP : Junior High School

Majority of participants does not have formal education in Fashion (87%), although two-thirds of them are having earlier fashion design experience, prior to the training. The distinction between attending formal fashion education and non-formal fashion education (e.g. short courses) lies in the theoretical design framework provided in formal education. This is crucial in analysis as it can indicate the industry-application readiness of the proposed Fashion Design Framework.

The result of Portfolio and Gap Analysis is as follow:

Manuscripts can be written in Indonesian or English with a maximum of 15 pages of figures and tables. Manuscripts must be written according to this article template in a print-ready format. Articles must be written in A4 size (210 x 297 mm) and with a left margin of 2.54 cm, a right margin of 2.54 cm, a top margin of 2.54 cm, and a bottom margin of 2.54 cm. Manuscripts must be written in Times New Roman font with a font size of 12 pt, single-spaced, and in a single-column format (except for the article title, author's name, and abstract). The distance between columns is 1 cm.

Table 2 Portfolio and Gap Analysis

Participants	Construction	Creativity	FDP Score
A	2.3	2.3	1.0
B	3.0	3.0	0.0
C	4.0	3.0	2.0
D	4.0	3.0	2.0
E	3.0	2.3	0.0
F	3.7	3.3	1.0
G	2.7	2.7	0.0
H	3.0	2.0	2.0
I	2.7	2.3	0.0
J	2.7	2.7	1.0
K	2.3	2.7	0.0
L	3.3	3.7	2.0
M	3.0	2.0	0.0
N	2.3	2.3	2.0
O	3.0	2.3	0.0

Source: Primary data processed by researchers (2025)

The formation of the group is primarily determined by a shared interest in a specific theme or visual inspiration that will be developed into a collection, and their educational backgrounds. Each group demonstrated a unique way of translating local cultural elements into visual form thru a contemporary design approach.

Table 3 Participant Grouping and Group Score

Group	Participants	Construction	Creativity	FDP Score
1	H, D, G	3.2	2.6	1.3
2	L, B, F	3.3	3.3	1.0
3	N, E, C	3.1	2.6	1.3
4	O, I, K	2.7	2.4	0.0
5	M, A, J	2.7	2.3	0.7

Source: Primary data processed by researchers (2025)

Group 1 was inspired to adapt the sogan batik dyeing technique using eco-printing. The same applies to the use of batik motifs. The Lumbon motif is transformed into a leaf motif that is easily found in the home environment, such as mango leaves and guava leaves.

Group 2 adapted tree branches as a motif and used the batik technique in the dyeing process, but the motif utilized the original color of the Mori fabric. Group 3 modified the Lumbon motif in various sizes and combined it with a contemporary batik motif, namely the Jenderal Sudirman motif.

Group 4 translates the silhouettes of ginger slices and raindrops into batik motifs, realized as rhythmic lines, showcasing a more abstract exploration of form while remaining rooted in local daily life. Group 5 makes jasmine flower to become the main inspiration for the batik motif, even tho the motif is white, utilizing the color of the Mori cloth and combining it with a sunset-themed background.

Recheck this grouping analysis

During Training phase, participants were introduced to FDP framework. One of the assignments is to conduct research and find theme direction.

This is where participants begin to understand the importance of searching for meaning, symbols, and visual narratives that can enrich the value of the collections they produce. Participants are also encouraged to create mood boards that not only contain visual references but also include color palettes, fabric textures, and potential combinations of silhouettes and materials.

The following are mood board samples resulted from the discussion:



Figure 1. Moodboard Group 4
Source: Research documentation (2025)

Participants are then encouraged to further refine the result prior to proceeding to Design step. The next phase of the research (Mentoring and Monitoring) was conducted remotely. Participants are given

During the Design Development stage, participants began translating their visual inspiration into sketches and 2D designs. Many of them initially found it difficult to establish a connection between the theme, motifs, and garment shapes. However, thru intensive

mentoring and feedback sessions, participants were able to develop designs that were more mature and aligned with the principles of ready-to-wear clothing design.

Visual experiments were conducted in the form of fabric sampling, fabric testing, and color adjustments. Some participants utilized batik waste as an additional accent, demonstrating a concern for sustainability. They also began to understand the importance of balance between esthetics and functionality, especially in terms of comfort, ease of use, and mass production potential.

Some example of sketches from participants:

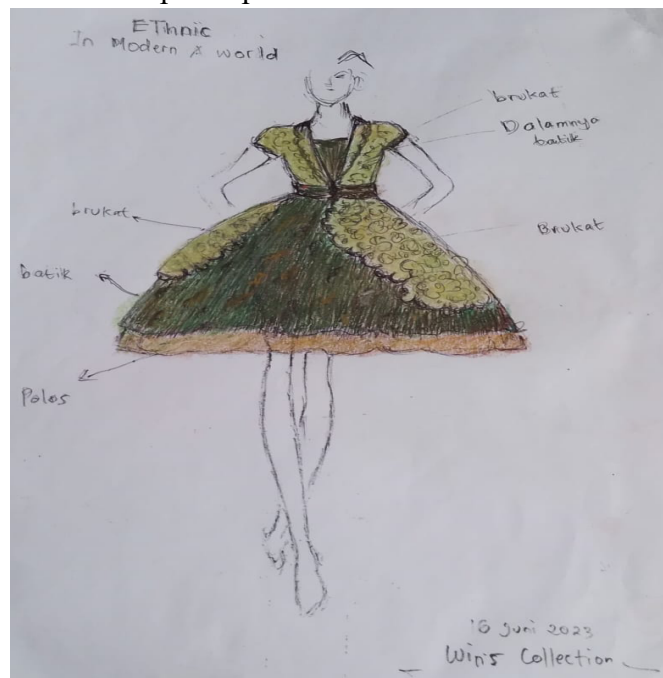


Figure 2. Sketches Resulted from Moodboard of Group 3

Source: Research documentation (2025)



Figure 3. Sketches from Moodboard Group 4

Source: Research documentation (2025)

The final products of the collection are showcased in a professionally curated fashion show. The assessment is conducted by a panel of judges consisting of academics and industry practitioners. The evaluation results show a significant improvement in design quality, particularly in terms of theme consistency, exploration of batik motifs, and visual communication of cultural messages.



Figure 4. Hasil Karya Group 3



Figure 5. Hasil Karya Group 4

Source: Research documentation (2025)

Thru in-depth interviews, participants revealed that the FDP provided a clear structure and guided them in thinking and working in a focused manner. One participant stated, "I used to draw based on feeling. Now I know the process: from idea to research to finished product." However, some participants also mentioned that the research process was the most challenging part because it required time, access to references, and the ability to organize ideas.

The implementation of FDP also encourages reflection on their creative identity as local designers. Participants are beginning to realize the importance of preserving the uniqueness of Purbalingga batik while still innovating to keep up with market trends. In this regard, FDP proved to be an educational medium that not only enhanced technical skills but also strengthened the position of local culture within the context of contemporary design.

CONCLUSION

The study found that the development of contemporary fashion collections based on Batik Purbalingga had been constrained by limited knowledge of formal design processes, and demonstrated that the Fashion Design Process (FDP)—structured into five stages (Design Brief, Research and Themes Direction, Design Development, Prototyping, and Collection Product)—provided an effective and accessible framework for designers without formal fashion education. Through training, mentoring, and evaluation, participants successfully completed collections that showed clear improvement, particularly in theme consistency, motif exploration, and the communication of cultural meaning, as noted during the final fashion presentation. The framework also helped shift participants' creative approaches from intuition-based practices to more structured and reflective methodologies, enabling them to better connect conceptual ideas with tangible garment design. However, the research stage remained the most challenging component due to its demands on time, resources, and analytical skills. Overall, the study confirmed that the FDP is a viable tool for guiding fashion development outside academic contexts while strengthening the cultural relevance of Batik Purbalingga in contemporary fashion; future research should focus on simplifying and enhancing the research phase—potentially through the integration of digital or AI-assisted tools—to improve accessibility and efficiency for practitioners.

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